

REMARKS

Claims 1-35 remain pending herein. Claims 19-21 and 25-35 have been amended hereby.

This Preliminary Amendment is submitted to eliminate multiply dependent claims from the above-identified application.

Examination of this application on its merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment: Claim Mark-ups

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~~15. The image forming method according to claim 14, wherein one type of the thermoplastic resin constitutes a main component of the thermoplastic resin and has a number average molecular weight of not more than 10000 while the other type has a number average molecular weight of not less than 10000.~~

~~16. The image forming method according to claim 10, wherein a release layer is further provided between the thermally transferable protective layer and the substrate film.~~

~~17. The image forming method according to claim 16, wherein the release layer is composed mainly of an acrylic resin having a number average molecular weight of not more than 40000.~~

~~18. The image forming method according to claim 10, wherein the thermally transferable protective layer contains an ultraviolet absorber.~~

19. (Amended) A protective layer transfer sheet for use in providing the image forming method according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 18.~~

20. (Amended) A record comprising a protective layer provided on the image of the print by the image forming method according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 18.~~

21. (Amended) A record produced by the image forming method according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 18~~, the record having a specular glossiness at 45 degrees in the range of 70 to 110% according to JIS Z 8741.

~~22. An image forming method comprising the steps of:~~
 providing a protective layer transfer sheet comprising a thermally transferable protective layer having a single or multi-layer structure separably provided on a substrate sheet;
 providing a print output by a nonsilver photographic color hard copy recording system;

putting the protective layer transfer sheet onto the print and thermally transferring the protective layer onto an image in the print so as to cover at least the printed portion; and

separating the substrate sheet from the protective layer transfer sheet to form an image provided with a protective layer,

the specular glossiness of the image provided with the protective layer being 65 to 110% as measured in the angle range

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~~layer before the transfer of the protective layer as measured at 45 degrees according to JIS Z 8741.~~

25. (Amended) The image forming method according to claim 22 ~~any one of claims 22 to 24~~, wherein the nonsilver photographic colorhardcopyrecordingsystemisanyoneofanelectrophotographic recordings system, an inkjet recordings system, and a thermal transfer recording system.

26. (Amended) The image forming method according to claim 22 ~~any one of claims 22 to 24~~, wherein, in the protective layer transfer sheet, the thermally transferable protective layer contains an ultraviolet absorber.

27. (Amended) A protective layer transfer sheet for use in providing the image forming method according to claim 22 ~~any one of claims 22 to 24~~.

28. (Amended) A record comprising a protective layer provided on an image in a print by the image forming method according to claim 22 ~~any one of claims 22 to 24~~.

29. (Amended) The image forming method according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1, 10, 22, 23 and 24~~, wherein the thermally transferring step is carried out by means of a thermal head.

30. (Amended) The image forming method according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1, 10, 22, 23 and 24~~, wherein the thermally transferring step is carried out by means of a heat roll.

31. (Amended) The image forming method according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1, 10, 22, 23 and 24~~, wherein the protective layer transfer sheet is used in a roll form.

32. (Amended) The image forming method according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1, 10, 22, 23 and 24~~, wherein the protective layer transfer sheet is used in a separated sheet form.

33. (Amended) The image forming method according to ~~any one of claims~~ claim 32, wherein an assemblage comprising a mount and a protective layer transfer sheet secured on top of the mount is used.

34. (Amended) The image forming method according to ~~any one of claims~~ claim 33, wherein each size of the mount, the protective layer transfer sheet and the print satisfies the following relationship:

35. (Amended) The image forming method according to claim 33 ~~any one of claims 33 or 34~~, wherein a basis weight of the mount is in a range of 80 to 500 g/m².